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TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

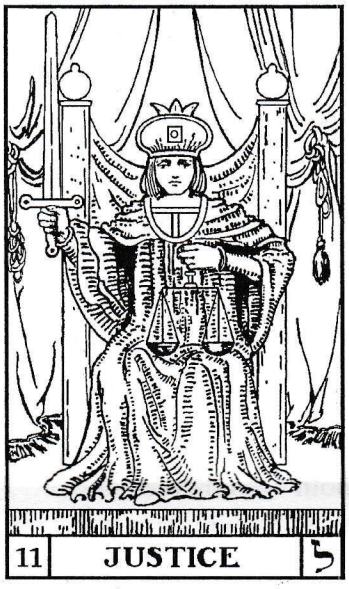
Lesson No. 25

BUILDERS OF THE ADYTUM

TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

Lesson Twenty-five

ACTION-EQUILIBRIUM



"Equilibrium is the basis of the Great Work", says an occult maxim. This doctrine is behind all the meanings of Key 11.

Consider the number itself. Its digits equal each other. Thus 11 is a glyph of balance, or equilibrium. Hence it typifies equality, parity, symmetry and poise. 11 is similar to the zodiacal sign Gemini, ♊. The idea of equilibrium implies that of duality. Balance, says Eliphas Levi, is the result of equalizing opposing activities or forces.

"Equilibrium is the result of two forces, but if these were absolutely and permanently equal, equilibrium would be immobility and consequently the negation of life. Movement is the result of alternated preponderance—warmth after cold, mildness after severity, affection after anger—this is the secret of perpetual motion and the prolongation of power. To operate always on the same side and in the same manner is to overload one side of a balance, and the complete destruction of equilibrium will soon result. Everlasting caressing quickly engenders disgust and antipathy, in the same way that constant coldness or severity alienates and discourages affection."

THE KYBALION states the same law thus: "To destroy an undesirable rate of vibration, put in operation the Principle of Polarity and concentrate upon the opposite pole to that which you desire to suppress." The same book gives this excellent summary of the Principle of Polarity:

"Everything is dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites; like and unlike are the same; opposites are identical in nature, but different in degree; extremes meet; all truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled."

The Hebrew letter on this Key is ל, Lamed. It means "ox-goad". Thus it suggests the idea of control combined with that of incitement. An ox-goad impels an ox to move and keeps him on the road chosen by the driver.

In the Hebrew alphabet the Ox is א, Aleph, the letter represented in Tarot by the Fool. Yet it is not really true that we incite the superconscious Life-power to enter into action. Nor is it

true that we exert any control over it, or do anything to determine its perfectly free, spontaneous activity. On the other hand, we do **seem** to do both these things.

What really occurs is that the Life-power **directs itself** by means of the functions of personal consciousness represented by the letter Lamed and by Key 11. These functions **appear** to originate within us. Persons who are ignorant of the true situation suppose these activities to be peculiar to themselves, but they are mistaken.

For all practical purposes, however, they who know the truth of the matter act just as if they were directing the Life-power. They **know** better, but they act "as if", just as a man who knows the sun does not revolve round the earth may find it convenient to reckon the hours by the sun's apparent position in the sky.

The shape of the letter Lamed is that of a serpent. It represents the same force we discussed in our study of Teth and Key 8. Teth is the coiled serpent, ט, Lamed, ל, is the same snake uncoiled and active.

The sign Libra is attributed to Lamed. Its name means "scales", and this makes obvious the correspondence between this sign and the eleventh Tarot Key.

Astrologers say Libra governs the kidneys whose function is to maintain the chemical equilibrium of the blood. The kidneys are organs whose function is both eliminative and balancing. They clear the blood stream of impurities which are produced by bodily action, and thus maintain the proper balance of its elements.

The ruler of Libra is Venus. In Tarot, Venus is connected with creative imagination. All occult practice calls creative imagination into action. Books on yoga are full of exercises in mental imagery. The writings of alchemists and magicians abound in similar instruction. Modern metaphysical teachers make use of the same principle. The analytical psychologists use mental imagery in treating neuroses. Creative imagination is the foundation of Tarot practice.

Imagination builds faith. True imagination—not mere fantasy—rests on the firm foundation of science. THE ARABIAN NIGHTS, in their tale of the Magic Carpet, give us a fanciful notion of flying; but from Leonardo da Vinci to the designers of jet planes, true creative imagination has justified man's faith in his power to fly. With every advance in exact knowledge, in exact weighing and measuring, creative imagination grows clearer and sees farther. Leonardo had his faith, though he never flew, and he made valuable contributions to the science of aviation. The Arabian story-teller was content with flights of fancy. He rendered no service to the cause of the conquest of air because he had no real faith in the possibility that man might master that element.

Faith is a prime prerequisite for the accomplishment of the Great Work. Without faith you can do nothing. You must have confidence in the principles whereby you operate. You must have faith in yourself.

Hence occult schools make their pupils familiar with the lives and achievements of adepts who have completed the Great Work. Study the lives of Jesus and Buddha. In what they said and did, the principles of the Great Work are explained and exemplified.

The planet exalted in Libra is Saturn. It represents the power of limitation which makes possible the manifestation of specific forms. The power of limitation is actively at work in what Orientals call **Karma**. It expresses itself to us as undeviating justice. Hence the Saturn power has its highest manifestation in the Great Work which enables us to control Karma.

Man can make a full and complete conquest of his future. He can make whatever Karma he chooses. Some persons are so afraid of "making bad Karma" that they do nothing whatever to improve the conditions in which they live. Others are afraid of "interfering" with Karma. Don't worry about that. It can't be done.

You can generate fresh Karma, but you cannot change immutable law nor interfere with it. You must reap what you sow, but you may select your seeds and so determine the nature of tomorrow's harvest. As for today's tares among the wheat, use your discrimination. You can put even bad Karma to good use if you are ingenious.

There is also the type of person who "invites his Karma", and immediately begins to have all sorts of unpleasant experiences which he "bears" with a proper facial expression of uncomplaining martyrdom! What has really occurred is that he has had the silly notion that Karma is identical with sorrow and disaster. Thus he has more or less definitely imagined evil forms of experience, and subconsciousness has faithfully reproduced his mental pictures in the materials constituting his environment.

These self-deluded martyrs have not let loose their Karma from a Pandora's box of afflictions in the custody of the Lords of Destiny. They have simply indulged their imaginations in making patterns of evil, and what they get is what they have made.

We cannot escape from Karma because in all the universe there is no such thing as inaction, and the basic meaning of Karma is **action**. The same meaning is behind the Hebrew noun translated "Work".

This is attributed to the letter Lamed. The fruit of what we call "inaction" is loss of faculty and function, because what is not used atrophies. Yet this very loss of power is **action in the wrong direction**. We work as hard to fail as we do to succeed—harder, in fact. Thus Madam Blavatsky wrote: "Inaction in a deed of mercy is action in a deadly sin."

The truth of the whole matter is found in the admonition: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." This does not mean you should exert as much force in picking up a pin as you would to lift a crowbar. "With thy might" means you must apply your **whole** power to whatever you do, whether the expenditure of energy be small or great. This takes concentration, and concentration is basically limitation, the power of Saturn, for concentration eliminates every distraction which takes force away from the work you have in hand.

COLORING INSTRUCTIONS

KEY 11. JUSTICE

Yellow:	Between curtains in background.
Green:	Surrounding square on crown; cape over shoulders.
Blue:	Sleeves (same shade as canopy of chariot in Key 7).
Indigo:	The letter T on woman's breast.
Violet:	Curtains (not ropes, tassels or fringe), oval round neck, veil connecting pillars of throne (a lighter violet for this veil).
Gray:	Throne and dais.
Gold:	Balances, sword hilt, rings holding ropes on curtains, outline and peaks of crown.
Steel:	Sword blade.
White:	Shoe, square on crown, panels beside T on woman's breast.
Blonde:	Hair.
Red:	Circle in square on crown, garment (not cape or sleeves), ropes, tassels and fringes on curtains.